



FACT SHEET

GRID RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

Established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the U.S. Department of Energy's Grid Deployment Office is administering a historic \$10.5 billion investment via the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) program to enhance grid flexibility, improve the resilience of the power system against growing threats of extreme weather and climate change, and ensure American communities have access to affordable, reliable, clean electricity when and where they need it.

IMPROVING TRANSMISSION, DISTRIBUTION, AND COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCY IN SOUTHERN MARYLAND

Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative's (SMECO) community is particularly vulnerable to outages resulting from severe weather due to its heavily wooded areas. To improve the resilience and reliability of its system, SMECO will implement multiple projects to harden and protect the system. These projects include replacing and hardening transmission lines with new steel structures, strategic undergrounding, and installing high-capacity fiber optical wire for communications. This will upgrade and modernize vital grid infrastructure to increase resilience; harden the grid system against known threats, including those exacerbated by the effects of climate change; provide benefits to the community; and ensure environmentally sound practices in protected wetlands.

Anticipated Outcomes and Benefits

- › Retrofit and harden the distribution system with strategic undergrounding of 24.9 miles and replacing 37.9 miles of aging conductors.
- › Replace and harden four transmission lines.
- › Continue supporting union participation among SMECO employees.
- › Direct 25% of the total project expenditures to qualified diverse and minority-owned vendors.
- › Direct benefits to 51 **disadvantaged communities** (DACs), including communities with tribal heritage.
- › Continue lineman apprenticeship program which provides the opportunity to advance with an Electric Power Technician degree from the College of Southern Maryland (CSM), for which SMECO provides a scholarship.
- › Program participants receive hiring preference from SMECO, keeping local talent and experience within the community.
- › Donation of \$150,000 during the grant term to local community-based organizations whose missions align with GRIP priorities, including workforce development and a focus on DACs.
- › SMECO is dedicated to and encourages union participation among its employees. It will continue to reinforce its collective bargaining agreement with its operational staff and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 1718 during and well past the grant term.

PROJECT DETAILS

- › **Project:**
SMECO Transmission, Distribution, and Communications Resiliency Initiative
- › **Applicant/Selectee:**
Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative
- › **GRIP Program:**
Grid Resilience Utility and Industry Grants (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Section 40101(c))
- › **Federal cost share:**
\$33,567,016
- › **Recipient cost share:**
\$15,642,000
- › **Project Location:**
Maryland
- › **Project type:**
System Hardening

HELPFUL LINKS

- › **Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Program**
- › **About the Grid Deployment Office**